



United States Senator
Richard Shelby
REPORTS TO ALABAMA



**WORKING TO END SADDAM'S REIGN OF TERROR
THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF IRAQ**

Even as I write this, concern continues to mount about whether Saddam Hussein intends to honor Iraq's commitment to allow United Nations weapons inspectors to have unfettered access to suspected weapons storage sites. Certainly, concern about this rogue dictator is not new. His tyranny has plagued his neighbors and many of our allies for countless years, despite progress made during the Persian Gulf War. I believe, as do many of my colleagues in the Senate and House, that we have not done enough to stop Saddam's terror and destruction. He is not only an enemy of the United States, but an enemy of his own people. His lack of cooperation and repeated vile threats force the people of Iraq to suffer the effects of numerous sanctions and international condemnations imposed on his country, among Saddam's own atrocities which are too numerous to mention.

The course of action to deal with Saddam is complex and perplexing, particularly given current U. S. law on the subject. During the mid-1970's, President Gerald Ford signed an Executive Order which prohibits the United States from di-

rectly engaging in efforts to assassinate world leaders. Thus, the Order deems unacceptable assassination attempts by the United States to extinguish even the most treacherous of dictators---dictators like Saddam Hussein.

In an effort to deal with limitations that remain in place that prevent direct assignment attempts, I joined several of my colleagues in passing important legislation which establishes a program to support a democratic transition in Iraq. The Act, entitled the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998, makes it the official policy of the United States to seek to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, while promoting the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime.

Essentially, the bill, which was signed into law on October 31, 1998, calls on the President to select one or more Iraq opposition groups that would be eligible to receive funding to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein in Iraq and promote the emergence of a democratic government. The President must consider only organizations that: "in-

clude a broad spectrum of Iraqi individuals and groups opposed to the Saddam Hussein regime; and are committed to democratic values." The law states that U. S. supported Saddam-opposition-groups must also respect human rights, support and foster peaceful relations with Iraq's neighbors, maintain Iraq's territorial integrity, and foster cooperation among democratic opponents of the Saddam Hussein regime.

In addition, the Act also calls upon the President to establish an international criminal tribunal for the purpose of indicting, prosecuting, and imprisoning Saddam Hussein and other Iraqi officials who are responsible for crimes against humanity, genocide, and other criminal violations of international law.

I believe it would be best for Saddam Hussein's own people to remove him from power. Until that time comes, the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 is an extremely important and necessary step to move us toward a more peaceful and prosperous world. Certainly, I believe we should take whatever means are at our disposal to stop Saddam's reign of terror forever.

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